

Small Business Mentoring Quarterly Report

Reporting Period: First Quarter, January 1, 2002 through March 31, 2002

A. INTRODUCTION

This report discusses the status of the Small Business Mentoring for Compliance Assistance Outcome Measurement Subgrant awarded to Bridging The Gap for the period of January 1, 2002 through March 31, 2002. (Subgrant No. G01-BTG-01)

B. PROJECT ACTIVITY AND STATUS

Objective One – Clearinghouse of resources

1. Catalog regional and appropriate national technical assistance resources and compliance information available to small business and the public.

Bridging The Gap spent much of the first quarter researching small business challenges and resources. The project began by getting familiar with the specific issues small business are faced with and other projects or programs involving small business assistance. Next, Bridging The Gap gathered a number of resources for small business, ranging from compliance assistance programs to industry guides. These resources were summarized and organized to include federal, state, and general resources for small businesses in the regulatory and beyond compliance fields. The clearinghouse has been developed, and the Environmental Excellence Business Network (EEBN) Steering Committee is currently reviewing it, providing suggestions and ideas based on their experience. After summarizing their feedback, Bridging The Gap will send the resources to Missouri Department of Natural Resources for approval in April.

2. Survey and develop the capacity of local environmental business leaders as mentors.

Bridging The Gap has collected information on mentoring and specific environmental mentoring projects across the United States to use in developing this program. Bridging The Gap has also contacted the directors of many of these programs and the Institute of Corporate Environmental Mentoring to learn more about how to set up mentoring programs.

In the second quarter, Bridging The Gap will define the logistics of the mentoring program, including a capacity survey for environmental business leaders. Current survey models have been collected in the first quarter to use as examples.

3. Consolidate appropriate catalogued information and resources in a format for public and private access and use via the Internet.

Bridging The Gap unveiled a new website on March 15, 2002. In the business section of the site, a special heading for the Business-to-Business Mentoring program has been developed, and a general description copy was produced. Once the resource summary has been approved from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, it will be posted on the page (<http://www.bridgingthegap.org/atworkB2.htm>) in the second quarter.

Bridging The Gap will also be coordinating a track for small businesses at the Region 7 Environmental and Safety Symposium, September 19 and 20, 2002. The resource clearinghouse will be distributed at these sessions, and the sessions will highlight specific resources in more depth. Please see the attached conference teaser.

Objective Two – Small business participation

1. Develop tools for measurement outcome, including understand and awareness survey, behavioral change measurement, and environmental and health indicators. Work with Missouri Department of Natural Resources to approve the survey.

Bridging The Gap has been researching appropriate surveys for behavior change and environmental and health indicators. A number of example surveys have been collected. Early in the first quarter, Bridging The Gap will be developing a draft survey for Missouri Department of Natural Resources approval.

2. Develop a marketing plan to encourage small business participation including endorsement from the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, small business associations, and small business owners.

Bridging The Gap has a meeting planned for the first part of the second quarter with the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce's small business committee. Bridging The Gap is also planning to highlight the program at the Environmental Excellence Business Network event, Small Business Environmental Challenges, at Boulevard Brewing Company on April 5, 2002. The actual marketing plan will be developed in the second quarter.

3. Work with fifteen small business participants to establish clear, realistic goals that include timeline, resource commitment, and cost savings (where appropriate).

Planned for future quarters.

4. Match resources (both programmatic and mentoring) to small business participants.

Planned for future quarters.

5. Establish safeguards for both mentors and mentees regarding liability and competition.

As Bridging The Gap has researched other mentoring programs, the project coordinator has found examples of liability and confidentiality safeguards that will be evaluated in the second quarter.

6. Focus on compliance assistance and resource efficient opportunities for participants.

Planned for future quarters.

7. Determine the quantitative and qualitative goals and indicators for each small business participant.

Planned for future quarters.

Objective Three – Program expansion to other communities

1. From this two-year pilot project, determine the most effective methods of working with small businesses and outline this methodology in a manual. Evaluation data from this project will be compared with other compliance assistance projects to determine the best strategies, and the manual will be shared with other communities, state and the EPA. The manual and final report will include a description of the outcomes and final results from this project.

Planned for future quarters.

2. Present program, data, and experience at a national conference to assist other communities, state, and the EPA in the development of assistance programs for small businesses.

Planned for future quarters.

Objective Four – Evaluation and outcome measurement

1. Design a pre- and post-test survey to analyze effectiveness of this program by participants and by non-participants (control group).

Please see Objective Two, Task One.

2. Data collected from the pre and post surveys will be statistically analyzed to accurately compare the control and participant groups.

Planned for future quarters.

3. Where possible, enhance survey data on emissions and pollutant information. This will be done in partnership with EPA and the Missouri DNR to assess the quality of data reported by small businesses. In addition, BTG will work to establish baseline data with participating companies to assess changes in emissions and pollutants by participants.

Planned for future quarters.

4. Analyzed data will be included in the final report, manual, and conference presentation.

Planned for future quarters.

C. BUDGET

The following expenditures are for the reporting period of January 1, 2002 through March 31, 2002.

Personnel	\$19,227.67
Fringe Benefits	\$ 2,911.70
Travel	\$ 241.97
Equipment	\$ 1,517.66
Supplies	\$ 362.49
Contractual	\$ 273.64
Other	<u>\$ 2,254.83</u>
TOTAL	\$26,789.98